Minutes of the

Meeting of the Executive Committee

of the

World Council of Churches

17 – 20 February 2009

Meeting held at the

Ecumenical Institute, Bossey, Switzerland

These minutes have no official status until received, amended as necessary and approved by the Executive Committee at its next meeting. The official proceedings of the Executive Committee consist of a documented record of decisions taken by the Committee along with the texts of documents acted upon. The introductions to agenda items and summaries of presentations and discussions are prepared by the minute-taker for background information only, and should not be cited as part of the official proceedings of the meeting nor as such attributed to the speakers' names.

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Minutes of the Meeting of the Executive Committee of the World Council of Churches 17-20 February 2009 Ecumenical Institute, Bossey, Switzerland

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1 MORNING PRAYER

The executive committee met for prayer each morning in the chapel at Bossey, gathering around the theme of reconciliation.

On Tuesday, 17 February, Pastor Antonio Pedro Malungo shared a message on "Reconciliation and Truth" (Zechariah 8:16), reminding the congregation that, in this world of division, war, poverty, injustice and disease, martyrs are killed for telling the truth. The truth is not a creedal formula, but is God's active word – truth and justice walking hand in hand. The shocking nature of God's truth was made vivid through the symbolic action of the shattering of a clay pot on the hard stone floor of the chapel.

On Wednesday, 18 February, Dean Anders Gadegaard offered reflections on "Reconciliation and Memory" (Ephesians 2:11-22). He shared that the reconciliation of painful memories in God's name, through the atonement of Jesus Christ on the cross, transforms these memories into a creative and life-giving stream of blessing and gratitude. In a symbolic action, the shards of the broken pot were gently gathered into a clear bowl.

On Thursday, 19 February, the executive committee shared songs and prayers on the theme of "Reconciliation and Justice" using verses from Psalm 82, Amos 5, Isaiah 11 and Matthew 6. The pieces of the broken pot were carefully reassembled on the chapel altar.

On Friday, 20 February, Rev. Dr Tyrone Pitts spoke on "Reconciliation and Forgiveness" using Matthew 18. He reminded the members that forgiveness is not forgetting, but is a special kind of remembering, a transformed remembering through the love of God as displayed on the cross. In symbolic action, the restored pot on the altar was filled with colourful flowers.

2 PUBLIC HEARING ON RECONCILIATION

On Thursday, 19 February, the executive committee participated in a public hearing on reconciliation at the Ecumenical Centre in Geneva. The hearing formed part of the council's contribution to the UN International Year of Reconciliation (2009).

The hearing was moderated by Rev. Kjell Magne Bondevik, moderator of the commission of the churches on international affairs and president of the Oslo Centre for Peace and Human Rights. The meeting was addressed by Father Miguel d'Escoto Brockmann M.M., president of the sixty-third session of the United Nations General Assembly (by video); Rev. Dr Setri Nyomi, general secretary of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches; Archbishop Silvano M. Tomasi, permanent observer of the Holy See to the United Nations and Specialized Agencies in Geneva; and Rev. Dr Margaretha M. Hendriks-Ririmasse, vice-moderator of the WCC central committee. A written contribution was also received from Bishop Ivan M. Abrahams, member of the executive committee, who was unable to attend.

Mr Bondevik grounded the discussion in II Corinthians 5:18-21

Fr Brockmann called on churches to be united in offering a prophetic voice in these days of global moral crisis and the sin of poverty. Dr Nyomi shared stories of hope in which

churches have been instruments of reconciliation in South Africa, Liberia and in relation to globalization and the environment. Archbishop Tomasi related the theme of reconciliation to the gospel which proclaims the capacity for individuals and communities to be transformed, and called for an international doctrine of justice in post-conflict situations. Dr Hendriks-Ririmasse shared from her experience of Christian-Muslim reconciliation in Indonesia, in which the church found its role within the II Corinthians text and undertook many activities to build and deepen a culture of peace based on justice. In his paper, Bishop Abrahams offered a critical assessment of the truth and reconciliation commission in South Africa, concluding that "reconciliation" is itself a contested word, and that at best it is a process, rather than a destination.

The public debate following these presentations raised critical issues, including the pre-condition of truth-telling and a public recognition of histories which have been silenced; the difficulty of pursuing reconciliation while yet enduring severe oppression; and the challenge to international partners when local churches are themselves complicit, or at least silent, in structures of violence and oppression. The type of remembering toward which Good Friday calls us – remembering hope and goodness in the midst of suffering and evil – forms a model for Christian engagement in the dialectic between peace and justice, and toward restorative justice.

Following the hearing, a prayer service lifted up Revelation 22 as a Christian motif for healing and reconciliation. H.E. Metropolitan Dr Vasilios of Constantia-Ammochostos shared reflections on hope for the healing of the nations. The service was followed by an aperitif in the lobby of the Ecumenical Centre.

3 OPENING ACTIONS

3.1 Call to order

The executive committee met in decision session. Rev. Dr Walter Altmann, moderator of the WCC central committee, called the executive committee to order at 9:16 a.m. on 17 February 2009 and welcomed the committee to the snowy venue of Bossey.

3.2 Roll call and seating of substitutes

Rev. Dr Samuel Kobia, general secretary of the World Council of Churches, greeted the committee and called the roll of members present (see Appendix I). Apologies were received from three members. There were no substitutes to seat. The moderator declared the meeting to be properly seated with a quorum in attendance.

3.3 Adoption of agenda

The agenda was presented by the general secretary, and adopted by consensus.

3.4 Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the September 2008 meeting of the executive committee were presented by the general secretary.

No corrections being offered, the minutes were approved by consensus.

3.5 Sharing of news from executive committee members

The moderator invited sharing from those present of joys and sorrows from the ecumenical community since our last meeting.

He noted that the informal session held on 16 February 2009, which aimed at building fellowship and mutual trust among the members of the executive committee, was warmly appreciated by those who participated. It was felt that further such opportunities would be helpful.

3.6 Welcome from the Ecumenical Institute

Fr Prof. Dr Ioan Sauca welcomed the executive committee to the Ecumenical Institute at Bossey, and shared progress on the project to renovate the barn at Petit-Bossey into a conference centre using "green" building technology.

3.7 Membership of sub-committees

H.E. Metropolitan Prof. Dr Gennadios of Sassima reviewed the membership of the sub-committees (see Appendix II), which were confirmed by the executive committee.

4 General Secretary's Report

The executive committee met in hearing session. Rev. Dr Samuel Kobia, general secretary, presented a summary of his written report to the executive committee. He noted that he had scheduled an appointment to meet with US President Barack Obama, to represent the voice of the WCC and the churches worldwide.

Arising from his travels among the churches and regions, Rev. Dr Kobia lifted up four key themes: telling the stories of ecumenical peace work; working together with mutual understanding and an intergeneration approach to reconciliation and healing; deepening the analysis and practice of transformative justice; and embracing both the challenges and the opportunities of leadership transition within ecumenical organizations.

The general secretary noted developments in the ecumenical family, including renewed concern regarding theological aspects of the Kimbanguist Church, and celebration for the merger of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches and the Reformed Ecumenical Council, which in June 2010 will become the World Communion of Reformed Churches. Rev. Dr Kobia mentioned ecumenical developments in Korea, Turkey, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Gaza, Iran and Iraq. He anticipated making a visit to Iraq in the near future.

Rev. Dr Kobia shared an update on the situation of the two WCC offices in New York. He remarked that a strong and mutually supportive spirit of collaboration permeates relations between staff members of the two WCC offices in the United States. He then noted that he has called together an Advisory Group on Economic Matters to reflect on ecumenical theological and ethical contributions toward the search for a new global financial architecture.

The general secretary concluded his remarks with an update on the search for a venue for the 10th assembly. One formal invitation has been received, and several other expressions of interest are being pursued.

Members of the executive committee offered their appreciation for the report. In discussion, members remarked that, although we celebrate the historic outcome of the US election, it is imperative that the churches maintain their critical stance and continue to advocate for justice without being swayed by the popular "messianic" enthusiasm around President Barack Obama.

Members also raised concerns for the situation in Sudan, for the persecution of Christians in India, Iran, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, and for the ongoing emigration of Christians from the Middle East. Comments were made on the importance of the Kimbanguist issue for many ecumenical partners in Africa. The executive committee received the report of the general secretary with appreciation.

5 PUBLIC ISSUES

5.1 Proposed actions on public issues

The executive committee met in hearing session. Rev. Elenora Giddings-Ivory proposed that the executive committee consider the following public issues at this meeting:

- Statement on the Democratic Republic of Congo
- Statement on International Women's Day
- Statement on Gaza

The public issues sub-committee is responsible for bringing these matters for executive committee consideration.

5.2 Report of the public issues sub-committee

Rev. Dr Walter Altmann moderated a decision session and invited H.E. Metropolitan Dr Nifon of Targoviste to present the recommendations of the public issues sub-committee.

5.2.1 Statement on the situation in the Democratic Republic of Congo

The executive committee approved the following statement by consensus.

Statement on the Situation in the Democratic Republic of Congo

Background

1. The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), the third largest country in Africa, is the embodiment of human pain. The DRC war has taken a terrible toll: some 4.3 million people have died in the last five years, and over 14 million Congolese are malnourished because of the protracted conflict. Aid workers have suffered attacks that have forced them to suspend activities in parts of Congo, leaving many displaced persons without assistance – the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) estimates that perhaps 70,000 people from the latest wave of displacement may not be receiving international assistance.
2. An estimated 40 per cent of deaths are of women and children. It is probable that upwards of 1,000 women are brutally raped each month. There is deliberate physical mutilation of their reproductive organs, sometimes with the use of guns, as a way of purposely annihilating and exterminating any future population. The women are often

left emotionally scared, as well as with untreated fistula resulting in incontinence. There is almost no medical care for them. They are isolated from others.

3. Reports from the field talk of widespread looting, attacks on civilians and forced conscription into armed groups. The tortured DRC continues to generate blood fortunes that swell the coffers of some architects of globalization and a consortium of international criminals who supply arms in exchange for minerals. DRC's tropical forest, the largest in Africa, provides safe haven for rebels from neighbouring countries. These countries have felt justified in crossing into the DRC in pursuit of the rebels, to safeguard their own national security.

4. The minerals of the DRC include large deposits of diamonds. The radium of the DRC represents 60 per cent of the resources used in the West. Apart from Russia and Canada, the only other worthwhile global source of cobalt is DRC. Some 40 per cent of the global supply of coltan, necessary for the manufacture of mobile telephones, comes from DRC. The confiscation of its mineral wealth has meant that the land of DRC, from the colonial era onward, has never truly belonged to the Congolese people. The nation has never been able to extricate itself from the grasp of its brutal history. The Belgian colonial rule perpetuated the deliberate plunder of natural resources.

5. In its political history, King Leopold II of Belgium ran Congo as a private estate and oversaw the estimated deaths of millions and the mutilation of others as part of a pattern of coercive tactics to gain cheap labour. Patrice Lumumba, the first Congolese Prime Minister, was assassinated on January 17, 1961, reportedly with the collusion of Belgium, the USA and other western powers. Mobutu Sese Seko's dictatorship was marked by untold human rights violations. Under Mobutu, the Congolese endured misrule for 30 years. He survived in power with the help of the United States who provided him with more than $300 million in weapons and $100 million in military training. Laurent Kabila overthrew Mobutu in 1997, following the end of the Cold War. He was assassinated in January 2001. Joseph Kabila was then installed as president, taking over from his late father Laurent Kabila at the same time that ethnic militarism was transforming the eastern region of the DRC into a patchwork of warlords' fiefdoms. One of the notable forces supporting Kabila is the Mayi Mayi militia movement, a loose association of traditional Congolese "defence" forces.

6. The church/state relationship in the DRC has a chequered history. At times the church has been very close to the state; at other times the church has kept a sacred distance between politicians and hierarchy. There also have been historical moments when sections of the church have been the fiercest critics of the state. Upwards of 80% of the DRC population of 65 million is Christian; therefore, the state cannot entirely ignore the voice of the church. This is especially true because the church provides more humanitarian resources to the people (health, education, food) than the state ever did, whether during the colonial or post-colonial periods. Yet the church's prophetic role has not been as effective as it should have been, for the church has failed to speak with a unified voice on the socio-political conditions in the country.

7. In recent years, the church has given insightful leadership in the national debate on the future of DRC. The churches and local and international ecumenical organizations

have also stepped up their solidarity and involvement. ACT International as well as a number of specialized ministries from Europe and North America has increased the humanitarian and diaconal work.

8. With the joint goals of pastoral care and listening to the churches in the DRC, a group of church leaders visited the country earlier this year, led by Archbishop Bernard Ntahoturi, Anglican Archbishop of Burundi. Ntahoturi chairs the Council of Churches of Burundi and the Great Lakes Ecumenical Forum and is a member of WCC central committee.

9. Churches in Congo are working to alleviate the humanitarian crisis, promote a peaceful resolution to the conflict and advocate for an end to the violations of human rights. While many aid groups work to assist those in camps for displaced people, local members of Action by Churches Together (ACT) International are targeting for help the largely 'invisible' displaced families – those who are not in camps but sheltered in families' houses – and the increasingly vulnerable communities who are hosting them. Initial plans for assistance include support for an estimated 60,000 people, as well as water and sanitation support for significantly more families.

10. As of December 2008, it is estimated that nearly 250,000 people have fled their homes in the eastern part of the DRC escaping the fight that broke out between the army and rebels in August. These people have joined the 1,000,000 who fled in previous rebellions. The rebels say that they fight to protect the Congolese Tutsi community from being attacked by Rwandan Hutu rebels, who fled to DRC. Some of them fled after having perpetrated the 1994 Rwandan genocide. For a long time, the Congolese government seemed to have failed to stop the Hutu forces from using its territory. The situation would change due to the new development which has two important aspects: peace talks under the chair of the UN Secretary General's special envoy, General Olusegun Obasango, the former president of Nigeria. The second round of talks took place in Nairobi, Kenya in January 2009. The second aspect is the combined forces of the DRC and Rwandan armies whose main objective is to disarm the Rwandese rebels in the DRC.

The WCC executive committee, meeting at Bossey Switzerland 17-20 February 2009:

A. ***Welcomes*** the Goma and Nairobi meetings which revived the peace talks that served toward seeking unity of common purpose with neighbouring countries in order to enhance human security in the Great Lakes region and commends the political leaders committed to these processes.

B. ***Applauds*** the Congolese churches for their steadfast pursuit of dialogue and for taking a frontline role in leading the civil society in the process of inter-Congolese dialogue, accompanied by the All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC) and FECCLAHA (Fellowship of Councils and Churches in Great Lakes and the Horn of Africa).

C. ***Encourages*** the one ecumenical family to accompany and support the Congolese churches as they engage in the daunting task of advocacy for rehabilitation of the state, with particular attention to its functions and authority, good governance and

national sovereignty, as well as to the healing and reconciliation of the whole people. Dialogue and healing among communities must include the war-torn eastern region.

D. ***Condemns*** the atrocities and wanton destruction of property, committed particularly in the mineral-rich eastern Congo, as well as condemning the plunder of Congo's natural resources which has contributed to turmoil in the country.

E. ***Challenges*** the international community to step up humanitarian support and technical support for national reconstruction, helping to stimulate and guide socio-economic restitution for the people of the DRC who have been cheated of their wealth through systematic international plunder of natural resources which should be destined for the well being of the Congolese people.

F. ***Urges*** international support for the Congolese churches, the people of the DRC and the civil society as they pursue sustainable peace and national reconciliation through promulgation and reinforcement of laws to with those goals.

G. ***Calls*** on the African Union and the United Nations to be actively involved and to monitor peace initiatives in DRC, and to support the people of Congo in pursuing present and future opportunities for peace and reconciliation.

H. ***Urges*** the United Nations Security Council to strengthen and reinforce the embargo against illegal arms trafficking as well as monitoring illegal arms transfers, especially in the eastern Congo, by increasing the monitoring and pressure on international community to comply with the measures outlined in Security Council Resolution 1807.

I. ***Calls*** on UN agencies and bodies implementing UN Security Council Resolutions 1325 and 1820 concerning women and peace and ending sexual violence to provide resources, programming and technical expertise to end impunity for those responsible for sexual violence in the DRC and to increase resources and capacity of UN resources to accompany and provide health and healing services to victims of sexual violence and ensure that initiatives to end sexual violence are integrated in all peacekeeping and peace-building initiatives in the DRC.

J. ***Calls*** on the United Nations to continue with peacekeeping efforts by revising the mandate of the United Nations Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUC) to include more practical and concerted efforts especially in eastern Congo while at the same time expanding peacekeeping presence to other conflict areas and to implement an institutionalized approach to disarmament and demobilization throughout the country.

K. ***Mourns*** the death of Dr Alison Des Forges, who died tragically in the 12 February 2009 airplane crash which was attempting a landing at the Buffalo, New York airport. She was one of the leading experts on the human rights violations in the DRC, Rwanda and Burundi. Through her research and twenty years of work at Human Rights Watch, she testified eleven times at the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda. Her work is credited with bringing credibility to the charge of genocide in the region.

L. ***Prays*** for Dr Des Forges, her family and friends and especially for the untold millions who have suffered and continue to suffer the ravages of this despicable time in our history.

5.2.2 Statement on International Women's Day, 8 March 2009

The executive committee approved the following statement by consensus.

Statement on International Women's Day, 8 March 2009

1. The International Women's Day (IWD)[1] was born one hundred years ago from the National Women's Day (USA) as one response by women to their reality of oppression and inequality in economy and suffrage. As a vibrant movement for change, it has since spread to all the corners of the world. A century later IWD remains an occasion in which women and men celebrate women's contributions and achievements while identifying the challenges women continue to face. Women in the churches have, in many parts of the world, joined in celebrations with other women's groups to mark this day. It has provided a time for Christian women to celebrate their gifts to the churches, to call on the churches to become even more inclusive and to recognize the significant role women play in many of their ministries.
2. Since the inception of the World Council of Churches (WCC) in 1948, the churches have together expressed in many ways their commitment to women and acknowledgement of the role and participation of women in the life of the churches. This position has been based on the affirmation by churches from different traditions that women have equal dignity with men as representations of the image of God, *imago Dei* (Genesis 1:27). With such an affirmation, therefore, women have participated as equal partakers in redemption, co-workers in God's creation and in the Church's mission.
3. At the WCC's 9th Assembly in 2006, this commitment came to fruition when the WCC elected its main governing bodies, now composed of 40% women. We are encouraged that this wind of change sweeps through many of the WCC's member churches too, and in many places women's leadership is now a given.
4. "Unite to end violence against women" is the thematic focus for this year's IWD. According to UN reports,[2] violence against women and children remains the main barrier to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). During the 2004 International Affairs and Advocacy Week at the UN, the WCC called all its global member churches to take responsibility for mobilizing locally and advocating for the fulfilment of the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs[3]) at the national

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[1] For information on the history of the International Women's Day, see http://www.internationalwomensday.com/about.asp.

[2] Open, http://www.who.int/gender/documents/MDGs&VAWSept05.pdf; http://www.undp.org/women/docs/mdgs-genderlens.pdf; and http://www.unfpa.org/webdav/site/global/shared/documents/publications/2009/2009_add_gen_vio.pdf.

[3] MDGs are used as basic guidelines for the achievement of development for ensuring a healthy society. One of the common criticisms of MDGs is that they are a "top down" process, which excludes local authority and other stakeholders; for example, they confuse the question of who really sets the agenda for fighting poverty, and

government level. Such advocacy must include initiatives to address violence against women and children. To this effect, therefore, the WCC's Decade to Overcome Violence (DOV) has presented an opportunity to address, among other conflict-related issues, all forms of violence against women and children.

The WCC executive committee, meeting at Bossey Switzerland 17-20 February 2009:

A. ***Invites*** its member churches to be outspoken against the continuing manifestations of violence against women and children in:

- Gender disparities and imbalances expressed in women's struggle to attain adequate education and to access micro-finance loans.
- The gross economic injustices women and children face in most societies; for example, poor and unequal working conditions for women.
- The untold suffering and pain inflicted by political and economic turmoil often deliberately caused by national and international policies.
- The feminization of poverty, HIV and AIDS
- Rising numbers of women who lose their lives through maternal deaths, especially in the global south.[4]
- Increasing numbers of women and girls forced by wars, economic crises and environmental destruction to seek better prospects outside their villages and countries.
- Significant numbers of women and girls involved in and sometimes victims of illegal trafficking.
- Young girls forced into early marriages and therefore made vulnerable to the risk of early pregnancies, some of which contribute to early maternal deaths.
- Rising numbers of women and girls who are raped and sexually mutilated in war zones.
- Female genital mutilation, which is still practiced in some areas, in the name of religion or related misconceptions concerning what marriage entails to women and girls.
- Racism, xenophobia and sexism and their impact on women, particularly women of colour, whether free or imprisoned.[5]

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whose poverty? According to Patrick Bond, aspirational targets like the MDGs are far less important than the actual social struggles underway across the world for basic needs and democracy. For further discussion, open http://www.choike.org/documentos/bond_mdgs_2005.pdf

[4] The reported pregnancy-related mortality rate has increased in some countries while decreasing in others. There is a big gap in maternal mortality rates between the developed and the developing countries in favour of the first. It is difficult to estimate maternal mortality, but important to know its extent in order to achieve improvement. In addition to estimating maternal deaths it is important to identify the risk factors that have adverse effects on pregnancy outcomes. For a more detailed discussion on Africa, open http://www.gfmer.ch/Endo/Course2003/Maternal_mortality.htm, and http://www.un.org/ecosocdev/geninfo/afrec/bpaper/maineng.htm; on the USA, open, http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_qn4188/is_20070825/ai_n19491054.

B. ***Welcomes*** the opportunity the IWD annual thematic focus accords to its member churches to strengthen their own efforts to contribute to ending all forms of violence against women and children.

C. ***Affirms*** the different processes towards the International Ecumenical Peace Convocation (IEPC) that are undertaken by member churches, especially those which aim at addressing gender-based violence.

D. ***Stands in solidarity*** with indigenous women, women farmers and fisher-folk that are at the forefront of efforts to mitigate and adapt to the climate change crisis and to protect God's creation.

E. ***Calls*** on member churches to invest in the building of stable families as a sure source of positive socialization for gender equity and peace for both boys and girls. Church-based initiatives, such as developing Christian family life education for mutuality and faithfulness, should include education in human sexuality.

F. ***Urges*** member churches to use their theological and ethical resources as a basis for the rejection of all forms of violence against women and children as a sin, especially as they prepare for the IEPC.

G. ***Encourages*** churches to develop and adopt policies on sexual harassment.

H. ***Welcomes*** initiatives encouraging the involvement of men to embark on a journey of what it means to be "a man" within a world of gender justice and peace.

I. ***Calls*** on member churches to appropriate such initiatives for the promotion of "positive masculinities" so as to address gender-based violence that is directly connected to certain social constructs of the male gender.

J. ***Encourages*** Regional Ecumenical Organizations (REOs) to join hands with the WCC in its initiatives in building a movement for peace based on principles of gender justice; to advocate for women and men to become "movers for peace" through awareness-raising and gender training from both female and male perspectives; to establish a network of eminent women in church, government and society, who will work as midwives for just peace, linking activism for just peace and policy making, in preparation for the IEPC and beyond.

K. ***Invites*** its churches and the international community to advocate for a radical transformation of the global economic architecture so as to place justice and sustainability at the centre of the economy. This approach would include valuing vital contributions of unpaid care (i.e. household and community) and women's unpaid labour.

L. ***Condemns*** regulatory lenience, compounded by unjust economic systems, in the provision of affordable and adequate health care services so as to protect women's reproductive health against unnecessary maternal deaths.

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[5] For information on treatment of prisoners in the USA, open, http://www.sentencingproject.org/IssueAreaHome.aspx?IssueID=4#

M. ***Urges*** churches to mobilize their governments to sign on to the United Nations Resolution 63/155[6] (on the intensification of efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women); and Resolution 63/156[7] (on trafficking in women and girls).

N. ***Challenges*** governments to ensure the participation of women – economists, ethicists and women involved in business entrepreneurship – in framing a new financial architecture that will be mutually beneficial to all, even to those on the margins of the world economy.

O. ***Invites*** churches to celebrate this hundredth anniversary of the International Women's Day, March 8, 2009, with prayers and proposals for plans of action towards the elimination of all forms of violence against women and children in church and society.

5.2.3 Statement on the Gaza war

The executive committee approved the following statement by consensus.

Statement on the Gaza War

"In the very place where Jesus Christ walked upon the earth, walls now separate families and the children of God—Christian, Muslim and Jew—are imprisoned in a deepening cycle of violence, humiliation and despair."
– Amman Call, WCC International Peace Conference, June 2007, Jordan

1. The Gaza war during Christmas season took a terrible toll on lives that were already fragile and communities already battered. Bombs, missiles and rockets on densely populated areas have spread an unconscionable sorrow from Gaza to much of the world. More than 1500 Palestinians are dead – mostly civilians, children and women – thousands more are wounded, countless thousands are traumatized, and there is widespread destruction and damage to homes and institutions including church clinics and a hospital. Four more civilians are dead in neighbouring Israel, 11 soldiers were killed during the fighting and many other people injured.

2. The humanitarian situation in Gaza remains extremely alarming. More than one million people, that is 80% of the population, depend on food aid. Thousands of jobs have been lost. The educational and health systems have broken down due to the blockade that is still being imposed by the Israeli government. Palestinian church leaders, representatives from Action by Churches Together International and other humanitarian aid workers have been denied access to Gaza.

3. Still violence continues and the word peace is rarely spoken. With concerned people in many countries, we speak now to mourn the dead and to cry out with the wounded. The war and the political decisions behind it have deepened an endless and intolerable spiral of despair, violence and deaths.

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[6] For full text of UN Resolution 63/155, open:
http://daccessdds.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N08/480/09/PDF/N0848009.pdf?OpenElement

[7] For full text of UN Resolution 63/156, open
http://daccessdds.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N08/480/15/PDF/N0848015.pdf?OpenElement

4. All the lives lost are sacred. Civilians were trapped in the war zone and had no way to escape. All of us who are part of the international community failed in our obligation to stop the killings. Governments failed to fulfil their legal obligations to prevent or remedy the Gaza war under the terms of international law and international humanitarian law. Such failure discredits the law and gives encouragement to those who rely on the use of force.

5. The Gaza war brought people onto the streets in cities around the world while those responsible for the enforcement of international law stood by doing little to nothing. Israel, like any other state, has the right of self defence, but is also bound by humanitarian principles of proportionality and distinction. The imperative to protect human lives is mandatory for all parties involved – including the international community. All have failed in this responsibility. Civilians have suffered on both sides. However, as the United Nations Special Rapporteur for Human Rights noted, "the scale of civilian harm resulting from Israeli unlawful conduct was far greater than that of Palestinian unlawful conduct." Furthermore, given the evidence of possible war crimes, the international community has a "responsibility to protect" the population at grave risk in Gaza because the government responsible for them has failed to do so.

6. What happened in Gaza is not an isolated tragedy. It is to be seen in the context of the illegal occupation of Palestinian territory that began in 1967. In the case of Gaza the last three years have seen siege and collective punishment harden into a stringent 18-month blockade. Without an end to the occupation, the cycle of violence continues.

7. Israel's future, its well-being and its security depend on a just and genuine peace. The same is true for any prospective Palestinian state. Failure to achieve a just and peaceful resolution of the conflict will open the future to more violence and war. Indeed, while world attention was focused on Gaza, the expansion of settlements and violence against Palestinians continued in the rest of Occupied Palestinian Territory.

8. Gaza's suffering should serve as a reminder to governments to carry out their third state responsibility. International law requires states not to knowingly aid or assist another state in internationally unlawful acts and not to recognize such acts as lawful. They bear indirect responsibility if they assist or recognize such acts, for example, the illegal use of force and violations of laws and rights that take place daily in Gaza, the West Bank and East Jerusalem.

9. Palestinians who take up arms are also accountable under the law for their use of force. We join the international condemnation of the violence perpetrated by members of Hamas and other groups against civilians in Israel and against their own people.

10. Palestinian unity is essential not only for ending the occupation but also for eventually building a viable Palestinian state. Members of the international community bear partial responsibility for policies that divided people and political structures in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. It is incumbent on the international community now to actively and responsibly support the reintegration of Palestinian

political processes including elections and the reunification of Gaza, the West Bank and East Jerusalem.

11. We extend our solidarity to all Palestinians and Israelis who engage in the peaceful pursuit of national Palestinian independence and nonviolent resistance to foreign occupation. Nonviolent resistance is a right of people living under occupation. We encourage people of all nationalities, religions and good will to support the nonviolent struggle for a comprehensive and just peace.

12. We recall the many WCC policy statements that bear on present challenges, including those addressing the siege of Gaza (2008), the Amman Call to churches (2007), the need to engage with all the elected representatives of the Palestinian people (2006), assessing Israel's pullback from Gaza and ending economic ties to the occupation (2005), plus regular condemnation of all attacks against civilians and consistent church support for the implementation of UN resolutions as the basis for peace.

Accordingly, the WCC executive committee, meeting at Bossey, Switzerland 17-20 February 2009:

A. ***Commends*** the many churches, related ministries, international church organizations, regional and national councils of churches, and civil society groups including Jewish and Muslim organizations that responded to the tragedy in Gaza with prayer, advocacy and aid.

B. ***Invites*** greater church engagement in joint efforts for peace, including broader participation in the Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel (EAPPI), in the WCC-led World Week for Peace in Palestine Israel, 4-10 June 2009, and in other initiatives of the Palestine Israel Ecumenical Forum.

C. ***Calls*** member churches and related organizations, wherever applicable, to hold their own governments to account for third state responsibilities in the Israel-Palestine conflict under international law.

D. ***Recommends*** that member churches and related organizations in a position to do so practice morally responsible investment and purchasing in regard to corporations whose products or services support the occupation of Palestinian territory.

E. ***Calls for*** the United Nations to investigate alleged war crimes and other violations of international humanitarian law and human rights law by the parties to the Gaza conflict, including the use of weapons that have indiscriminate effects; and ***calls for*** the full implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1860 which requires *inter alia* that the government of Israel lift the siege of Gaza.

F. ***Urges*** the government of Switzerland as the repository of the Geneva Conventions to convene an international conference of the high contracting parties of the 4th Geneva Convention to investigate armed violations against civilian populations by the parties to the conflict.

G. ***Supports*** proposals that churches and governments which funded aid and infrastructure projects in Gaza hold the government of Israel accountable for the destruction it has caused during the war and demand compensation for the same.

H. ***Calls on*** the government of Israel to facilitate the on-going work of United Nations agencies in Occupied Palestinian Territory including access for the UN Special Rapporteur for Human Rights to the populations living under occupation; and ***also calls on*** the government of Israel to facilitate unimpeded access to Gaza for humanitarian aid workers, rehabilitation and reconstruction teams, pastoral delegations and clergy of religious congregations there.

I. ***Affirms*** Palestinian Christians in their endeavours to promote Palestinian unity, be of service to society, minister to their church members and join civil society in peaceful and nonviolent measures to bring the occupation to an end.

5.3 Recent actions on public issues

The executive committee received with gratitude the written report of actions on public issues since the September 2008 meeting of the executive committee.

5.4 Iraqi church leaders meeting

Members of the executive committee wished to reflect in the minutes the committee's affirmation of the 10-11 February 2009 meeting of twelve Iraqi church leaders in Lebanon and the solidarity of the World Council of Churches with this process.

6 PROGRAMME

6.1 Report of the programme committee core group

H.E. Metropolitan Prof. Dr Gennadios of Sassima moderated a hearing session. Ms Lois McCullough Dauway, moderator of the programme committee, presented the report of the programme committee core group, which met on 16 February 2009 in Geneva. The report summarized the core group's reflections on the programme plans 2010-2013, in which they took note of the current financial stress and the need to sharpen the Council's programmatic profile.

Executive committee members shared initial impressions and referred the programme plans and the core group's report to the programme sub-committee for further consideration.

6.2 Programme overview

At the invitation of the executive committee, each programme director gave a short verbal presentation of their work since the last meeting of the executive committee and the major issues and themes of the work ahead. Members of the committee engaged in thoughtful discussion on many of the areas raised. The committee appreciated the information presented, and hoped to receive similar updates in written form prior to future meetings of the executive committee.

6.3 Report of the programme sub-committee

Rev. Dr Walter Altmann moderated a decision session and invited Ms Outi Vasko to present the report and recommendations of the programme sub-committee.

6.3.1 Programme plans 2010-2013

The programme sub-committee received with appreciation the preparatory work of the programme committee core group.

The programme sub-committee listened to a presentation of the programmes (2010-2013) with comments from programme directors, including proposed changes and with financial data.

The programme sub-committee places on record its appreciation to the staff for the work which has been done to prioritize the projects and activities to bring a greater integration and coherence in the work and to produce a balanced framework in a context of reducing income.

Upon recommendation of the programme sub-committee, the executive committee approved by consensus the general direction of the programme plans 2010-2013, and recommended that the following points be taken into account when detailed plans are worked out. It also recommended careful consultation with funding partners and partners in the regions. The executive committee therefore:

- calls on the commission of CCIA and other sectors of the WCC to reflect on the value added of the commissions' work;
- requests the programme committee of the central committee to develop various scenarios in the context of the changing financial environment;
- requests the programme committee core group to work closely with the working group on governance, accountability and staff policy so as to call for the setting up of a personnel committee to help give direction for the kind of programme staff resources that the WCC needs, and to ensure that attention be given to staff needs and development;
- urges that as detailed planning continues, issues of further integration and the dynamics between the role of the WCC as a mobilising instrument of the ecumenical movement and its responsibility for advocacy be recognized. Both the risks and possibilities of these two roles should be taken into account when more concrete programme plans are developed;
- recommends that adequate care be taken to ensure that any changes that these plans imply are accepted by all staff, recognizing that sometimes change leads to resistance;
- encourages the sharing of information with the executive committee members when there are potential conflicts of interest or programme implications for the regions so that they can be better prepared to respond to questions;
- asks for more intentional efforts to be made by WCC communication to help link initiatives of the churches with the ongoing work of the WCC (for example on inter-religious dialogue).

6.3.2 Focus areas of the programme plans

The programme sub-committee reported that the directors presented the focus within each programmatic area, emphasizing integration and interaction within all WCC programmes.

The following are some of the issues that came up in the discussion, which the staff is requested to follow-up on:

- the role of the REOs; a more integrated approach to regional relations in the WCC;
- the role of the CCIA commission in integrating three programme areas;
- the need to draw together theologians and others from the regions to develop a new ecumenical theological vision;
- the need to ensure that spirituality is embedded in all the work but is given special visibility.

6.3.3 Comments on specific programmatic areas

The programme sub-committee made the following comments on specific programmatic areas:

WCC and the ecumenical movement in the 21st century (P1)

- Ensure increased resources for ECHOS – commission on youth in the ecumenical movement.

Unity, mission, evangelism and spirituality (P2)

- Ensure that spirituality has a visible presence in this programmatic area and in all the work of the WCC.
- Ensure that the concerns of Faith and Order be more integrated into the life of the WCC and are given greater visibility.
- Ensure that the work on inclusive communities is intentionally linked to and influences the work of both Faith and Order and Mission and Evangelism.
- An additional concern was expressed regarding the participation of some groups without ecumenical commitment at the Edinburgh 2010 event, especially from Latin America.

Public witness: addressing power, affirming peace (P3)

- Ensure that advocacy continues to be an integral part of the life and witness of the WCC.
- Ensure that the WCC's role in contributing to an ecumenical political vision at the UN, etc. is strengthened so that the WCC can maintain its global witness (for example on issues such as the global economy).

Justice, diakonia and responsibility for creation (P4)

- Ensure that there be a definite timeline on the decentralization of EHAIA to Africa.
- Ensure that the issue of climate change be given even greater prominence.

Education and ecumenical formation (P5)

- The general direction of the proposal on ecumenical theological education is affirmed by the programme sub-committee.

- Urge that there be more consultation with partners so as to finalize the proposal before the central committee in order to avoid misunderstandings at the central committee.

Inter-religious dialogue and cooperation (P6)

- Ensure that grassroots level dialogue, for instance involving youth and women, be continued and strengthened.
- A concern was raised that in some countries (for example Angola) the churches are unprepared to live with emerging Muslim communities and are seeking assistance.

6.3.4 Update on the mid-term programme evaluation

The programme sub-committee reported that it received an update on the mid-term programme evaluation. The team drawn from the WCC constituency is composed of Ms Omega Bula, United Church of Canada; Mr Samer Laham, Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch and all the East, Syria; Rev. Dr Martin Hirzel, Federation of Swiss Protestant Churches, Switzerland (central committee member) and Mr Jec Dan Borlado, Convention of Philippine Baptist Churches, Inc., Philippines (ECHOS). The team is presently sending out questionnaires to the WCC constituency, and will make selected telephone interviews in order to assess the impact of the WCC programmes. A final report of the mid-term evaluation will be presented to the central committee in September 2009.

7 INTERNATIONAL ECUMENICAL PEACE CONVOCATION

7.1 Update on plans for the IEPC

H.E. Metropolitan Prof. Dr Gennadios of Sassima moderated a hearing session. Rev. Elenora Giddings-Ivory presented an update on plans for the International Ecumenical Peace Convocation in May 2011 in Kingston, Jamaica. She shared information on the development of the theme over the four days, the spiritual life of the conference, steps toward mitigation of the environmental impact, the financial aspects, and the desire for additional staff capacity in the conference office.

Executive committee members shared their preliminary reflections and referred the IEPC update to the programme sub-committee for further consideration.

7.2 Comments on the IEPC

Rev. Dr Walter Altmann moderated a decision session and invited Ms Outi Vasko to present the report of the programme sub-committee regarding the International Ecumenical Peace Convocation (IEPC).

The programme sub-committee reported that it received an update concerning the IEPC and made the following suggestions:

- While appreciating the need to be careful to plan as funds are available, ensure that the event is not scaled down to such an extent that it does not have an impact.

- Recognizing the efforts already made, ensure that the concern for justice be reflected more intentionally in the agenda of the event. Focus the agenda more on few sharp themes rather than address many forms of just peace.
- Ensure that the interfaith dimension be strongly represented in the themes of the event.
- Ensure that the Caribbean churches and context influence the agenda and every aspect of the event.

8 FINANCE

8.1 Preliminary finance report

Rev. Dr Margaretha M. Hendriks-Ririmasse moderated a hearing session, and called upon the staff to present the preliminary finance report for 2008. Ms Elaine Dykes noted that these figures did not fully incorporate the results of the New York and Jerusalem offices, and that they have not yet been audited.

8.1.1 Preliminary results 2008 compared with budget and forecast

	Prelim 2008	*Budget 2008*	*Target 100%*	*F/cast 2008*
Income				
Membership & UDI	6,350	*6,690*	98.5%	*6,447*
Contributions	25,616	*26,508*	97.7%	*26,229*
Investment and currency (losses)/gains	(2,685)	*407*	(504%)	*(532)*
Rentals, sales & misc income	6,249	*5,903*	103%	*6,053*
Total Income	35,530	*39,508*	93.1%	*38,197*
Expenditure				
Grants	5,905	*6,110*	95.2%	*6,198*
Staff costs	17,873	*18,744*	98.6%	*18,118*
All other programme costs and transfers	15,671	*17,141*	96.0%	*16,319*
Total costs and transfers	39,449	*41,995*	97.1%	*40,635*
Net decrease	**(3,919)**	***(2,487)***		**(2,438)**
Decrease Restricted Funds	(3,644)	*(2,812)*		(2,725)
(Dec)/inc Unrestricted Funds	(275)	*325*		287
Total	**(3,919)**	***(2,487)***		**(2,438)**

8.1.2 Preliminary results 2008 compared with forecast 2008

	Unrestricted & Designated Fund		Restricted Funds		Total Funds	
	Prelim 2008	*F/cast 2008*	**Prelim 2008**	*F/cast 2008*	**Prelim 2008**	*F/cast 2008*
Income						
Membership & UDI	6,350	*6,447*	-	-	6,350	*6,447*
Contributions	-	-	25,616	*26,229*	25,616	*26,229*
Investment and currency	(1,065)	*(332)*	(1,620)	*(200)*	(2,685)	*(532)*
Rentals, sales & misc income	4,288	*4,099*	1,961	*1,954*	6,249	*6,053*
Distribution of unrestricted inc	(5,664)	*(5,883)*	5,664	*5,883*	-	-
Total Income	**3,909**	***4,331***	**31,621**	***33,866***	**35,530**	***38,197***
Expenditure						
Grants	43	*40*	5,862	*6,158*	5,905	*6,198*
Staff costs	4,379	*4,535*	13,494	*13,583*	17,873	*18,118*
All other programme costs & trfs	3,918	*3,967*	11,753	*12,352*	15,671	*16,319*
Total costs before redistribution	8,340	*8,542*	31,109	*32,093*	39,449	*40,635*
Redistributed costs	(4,156)	*(4,498)*	4,156	*4,498*	-	-
Total costs after redistribution	**4,184**	***4,044***	**35,265**	***36,591***	**39,449**	***40,635***
Surplus / (deficit)	**(275)**	***287***	**(3,644)**	***(2,725)***	**(3,919)**	***(2,438)***
Opening balance	24,163	*24,164*	19,851	*19,851*	44,015	*44,015*
Surplus/(deficit)	(275)	*287*	(3,644)	*(2,725)*	(3,919)	*(2,438)*
Closing balance	**23,888**	***24,451***	**16,207**	***17,126***	**40,096**	***41,577***

8.1.3 Preliminary balance sheet 2008

Assets	**CHF 000s**	**Related Obligation**	**CHF 000s**	**Net assets/ (obligations)**
Land & buildings	40,430	Mortgage loans & long term deferred income	24,160	16,270
Fixed asset investments	8,127	Endowment Fund	7,081	1,046
Investments	2,387	Programme Funds	6,453	(4,066)
Current assets	18,515	Current liabilities	3,702	14,813
	-	Long-term provisions	1,504	(1,504)
Total assets available after deducting obligations				**26,559**

Covering Reserves composed as follows:

Restricted Funds			
Restricted Fund for Fixed Assets	16,270	3,065	
Unrestricted & Designated Funds			
Designated Programme Fund		533	
Designated Fund for Fixed Assets		13,205	
General Reserve		9,756	**26,559**

8.1.4 Discussion

Dean Anders Gadegaard, moderator of the finance committee, offered some remarks of congratulation for the comparatively positive results given this difficult financial climate,

and serious concern at the failure of the membership contribution policies approved by the central committee but apparently not embraced by a large number of churches.

Members of the executive committee shared their impressions, and forwarded the preliminary financial report to the finance sub-committee for further consideration.

8.2 Report of the finance sub-committee

Rev. Dr Walter Altmann moderated a decision session and invited Dean Anders Gadegaard to present the report and recommendations of the finance sub-committee.

8.2.1 Finance overview 2008

The preliminary results for 2008 present a small decrease in unrestricted and designated funds of CHF 0.3 million and a decrease in restricted funds of CHF 3.6 million. Unrestricted funds included foreign exchange losses of CHF 1 million, resulting principally from revaluation of foreign currency positions held at the year-end.

The target increase to unrestricted and designated funds was CHF 0.3 million for 2008. Despite the shortfall of CHF 0.6 million compared to target, it was considered that the decrease of CHF 0.3 million reported in the preliminary results was a satisfactory outcome, given the effects of the global financial crisis.

The decrease in restricted funds of CHF 3.6 million was CHF 0.9 million greater than forecast. It was composed of three elements: an unplanned decrease following revaluation of the endowment funds of CHF 1.7 million; a decrease in total programme funds of CHF 1.7 million; and a decrease in other funds of CHF 0.2 million.

The decrease in total programme funds was CHF 0.6 million lower than the forecast level, providing an improved opening position for 2009. Overall, direct programme costs were 8% below forecast.

Following changes in Swiss law applicable from 2008 introducing requirements for audit reporting on the internal control system, a comprehensive audit report is to be issued prior to the approval of the financial statements by WCC governance. It had been determined that the comprehensive audit report would be issued to the audit committee and the officers of the finance committee, the latter to be authorized by delegation of executive committee to approve the financial statements for issue in accordance with prior years. The comprehensive audit report will also be presented to the finance committee for review in August.

Upon recommendation of the finance sub-committee, the executive committee approved by consensus to delegate to the officers of the finance committee the authority to approve the financial statements for issue.

8.2.2 Stewardship review 2008

Some stewardship matters related to the review of 2008 were considered by the finance sub-committee:

- Following the recommendation of executive committee in September 2008 a study of services provided to the related organisations in the ecumenical centre by FSA was documented and reviewed by the general secretary and the staff leadership group.

- As a result of increased costs, particularly for utilities and depreciation, the costs of running the ecumenical centre building exceeded rental income in 2008. In previous years net gains from rental income had resulted in a reduced cost of FSA services charged to the programmes.
- It had been identified that under WCC's accounting policies the level of financial support provided to the Ecumenical News International (ENI) and the Ecumenical Disability Advocates Network (EDAN) resulted in the requirement to consolidate their accounts with those of WCC.
- Following the recommendation of the audit committee KPMG have been requested to focus on information technology (IT) risks in their financial audit 2008. In addition a consultancy firm has been engaged to provide a study of IT service delivery.
- Annually it is required that a report be made to the finance sub-committee on the status of compliance with the policy on offices outside Switzerland. The last report was made in February 2008 and the next report will be provided in August 2009.
- The moderator of the finance sub-committee had reviewed the staff loans as at 31 December 2008. He noted that the number of staff loans had reduced to 21 from 25 in June 2008 and that the value of outstanding loans was reduced by CHF 59,000 in the same period. It was confirmed that a revision of the staff regulations was drafted to take account of the fact that loans may be granted to cover the balance of university or school fees which exceed the allowances offered.

Upon recommendation of the finance sub-committee, the executive committee approved by consensus the proposal to require that:

- target dates be set by the general secretary to resolve issues identified in the review of services to related organisations;
- a cost model be designed, to give a fair calculation of the share of operational costs to be charged to the related organisations occupying office space in the ecumenical centre. The cost model should be documented for discussion with the officers of the finance committee at the Round Table meeting in May 2009;
- the draft budget 2010 incorporate the financial plans of ENI and EDAN in accordance with the need to consolidate their accounts with those of WCC.

8.2.3 Internal control system

The finance sub-committee reviewed a report on the internal control project. Following the review of processes and analysis of risks, 64 key controls governing the accuracy and completion of the information in the financial statements had been documented. Staff had identified a number of control improvements to be made, including the development of certain policies. This self-evaluation was presented to the sub-committee, ranking issues by higher, medium and lower risk and by type of issue. It proposed target dates for the completion of the required corrective actions.

The control documentation and self-evaluation were reviewed in December by the auditors who confirmed orally that the project design and implementation met the

standards required by Swiss law. Audit testing of the controls will continue in March 2009.

Certain policies to be developed by 30 September 2009 will require the approval of governing bodies. These include a statement of ethical values for business practices, an anti-fraud policy, a "whistle-blowing" policy demonstrating that governance monitors the risk that management override internal controls, and a policy for governance review of IT strategy.

Upon recommendation of the finance sub-committee, the executive committee approved by consensus the proposal to require that:

- any policies to be approved by governing bodies be drafted and distributed to central committee members no later than one month in advance of its meeting in August 2009;
- the document FIN08 *Internal Control System Documentation* which sets out WCC leadership's corrective action plan concerning policies and other matters be provided to the working group on governance, accountability and staff policy for their information;
- the finance sub-committee receive a progress report on the implementation of corrective actions at its meeting in August 2009.

8.2.4 Revised budget 2009

The revised budget was presented to the finance sub-committee showing total income of CHF 36.3 million and total costs of CHF 38.5 million. The budgeted increase to unrestricted funds remained at the figure of CHF 300,000 as required by previous executive committee decision.

Since last reviewed by the officers in December 2008 the following significant changes to the budget were introduced:

- revision of budgeted foreign exchange rates with a negative impact on programme contributions of approximately CHF 800,000;
- revision of budgeted costs for the EAPPI and EHAIA projects following reductions in programme contributions;
- reduction in various project budgeted costs to fund a reserve of CHF 250,000 for IEPC following a funding partner decision to reduce its contribution.

The changes in the budget since December result in lower total income of CHF 1.9 million and lower total costs of CHF 1.1 million. Restricted programme fund balances brought forward from the preliminary results for 2008 were incorporated into the budget with a favourable impact of CHF 700,000.

The finance sub-committee observed that the distribution of unrestricted income of CHF 6.5 million to the programmes appeared to exceed the available membership and other unrestricted income by CHF 112,000. It was explained that the unrestricted funds budget included credits from other sources, in particular release of untaken vacation provision. The budget therefore included the distribution of all membership and other unrestricted

income to be received in 2009 and a transfer from unrestricted funds to programmes of CHF 112,000.

The finance sub-committee discussed what actions WCC might take to ensure that the small budgeted addition to unrestricted funds would be achieved if there were any adverse developments in currency rates, programme and membership contributions, and costs. It was concluded that, if it proved necessary to reduce expenditure, a revised budget would be presented for approval at the finance committee meeting in August 2009.

Upon recommendation of the finance sub-committee, the executive committee approved by consensus:

- the proposal to require the general secretary group to continue to monitor untaken vacation days to ensure that they are reduced according to plan;
- the revised budget 2009, as summarized here:

In CHF millions	Prelim 2008	Revised Budget 2009	Framework 2010*
Funds & Reserves brought forward	**44.02**	**40.10**	**37.95**
Income			
Membership & other unrestricted contribns	6.35	6.39	6.39
Programme contributions	25.62	23.62	22.28
Other Income	3.56	6.32	6.42
Total Income	**35.53**	**36.33**	**35.09**
Expenditure			
Programme & other costs & transfers	21.58	19.62	18.06
Salaries	17.87	18.86	17.73
Total Expenditure	**39.45**	**38.48**	**35.79**
Net Income / Expenditure	**(3.92)**	**(2.15)**	**(0.70)**
Increase/ (Decrease) Unrestricted Funds	(0.28)	0.31	0.70
Increase /(Decrease) Restricted Funds	(3.64)	(2.46)	(1.40)
	(3.92)	**(2.15)**	**(0.70)**
Funds & Reserves carried forward	**40.10**	**37.95**	**37.25**

*Framework 2010 figures exclude fund raising for IEPC

8.2.5 Capital expenditure projects

Fire security renovation of the ecumenical centre

The fire security renovation is proceeding according to plan and is expected to be completed in 2010 within the original budget of CHF 6.6 million. Although some delays have been experienced due to the harsh weather conditions this winter, the work on the Lac wing has been completed and the work on the Rhône wing is 85% completed.

Renovation of the main hall at the ecumenical centre

The project for renovation of the main hall at a cost of CHF 1.1 million is scheduled to take place between April and June 2009, in order to be completed before the central committee meeting in August. Requests for construction permits have been

submitted. Although no adverse comments have been received, the plans are subject to approval by the Geneva historical monuments commission, since the main hall is in a listed building.

The finance sub-committee confirmed that in accordance with the procurement policy, tenders for the works should be submitted to the officers of the finance committee with a recommendation for decision.

Development of conference facilities at Bossey

Four construction permit requests have been submitted for different elements of the project. These will be the subject of review by the historical monuments commission of the Canton of Vaud.

A detailed budget for the construction works for the barn renovation has been prepared, with a total cost of CHF 3 million. The overall limit for the project remains at CHF 7.78 million, although detailed budgets for the villa, apartments, access roads, car parks and other related project work have not yet been developed.

The finance sub-committee confirmed that in accordance with the procurement policy, tenders for the works should be submitted to the officers of the finance committee with a recommendation for decision.

8.2.6 Capital expenditure plan and financing 2008-2012

A report on capital expenditure in 2008 was reviewed, showing CHF 3.2 million expenditure compared to the plan of CHF 3.8 million. The difference concerns under-expenditure on the fire security renovation of the ecumenical centre because of delays in the works.

A capital expenditure plan of CHF 3.2 million for 2009 had been approved in Lübeck. It was requested that the plan now be increased to CHF 4.9 million to take account of CHF 0.7 million carried forward from 2008 for the fire security renovation, and CHF 1 million for the Bossey development. Subject to the issuance of the construction permits, it is anticipated that the Bossey works will commence in October 2009.

The financing plan was also reviewed. The fire security and the main hall renovations of CHF 7.7 million are to be partially financed by the loans of CHF 2.25 million approved by executive committee in Lübeck. The balance of CHF 5.45 million is planned to be funded from the general reserves which are backed by the deposits and bonds held in the general investment portfolio. To date, CHF 2 million in loans have been drawn down.

The preliminary results 2008 showed a decrease of CHF 0.3 million to the unrestricted funds compared with the increase of CHF 0.3 million which had been planned. In financing plans 2008-2011 reviewed in prior meetings, the level of general reserves decreased to CHF 8 million in 2009. However, as a result of the deficit in 2008, the financing plan now forecasts that the level of general reserves will drop to CHF 7.4 million in 2009. The policy sets 50% of staff costs as the required level for general reserves. The plan thus indicates that in 2009, the reserves will fall CHF 2 million under target.

The financing plan has been modelled with loans of CHF 7.2 million to cover the Bossey development of CHF 7.78 million, scheduled for 2009-2010. In the model, it is assumed that the gap in funding is covered from the general reserves. Assuming continued increases in unrestricted funds from 2009, general reserves are projected to regain a level of CHF 9 million in 2011.

Upon recommendation of the finance sub-committee, the executive committee approved by consensus:

- the capital expenditure limit of CHF 4.9 million for 2009;
- the loan limit of CHF 1 million for the Bossey development in 2009, with terms to be approved by the officers of the finance committee if the loan is required before August 2009;
- the proposal to require that the financing plan be reviewed by the finance committee, with attention to the forecasting for the unrestricted funds increase for 2009.

8.2.7 Report on the meeting of the moderator of the finance sub-committee with the World Council of Churches pension fund board

Following the recommendation of executive committee in September, the moderator of the finance sub-committee met with the members of the WCC pension fund board to review the financial situation of the pension fund.

The financial results for 2008 had not yet been finalized, however it was expected that the pension fund would report a serious deterioration in the coverage of its obligations due to the poor investment performance. In December 2008, following the request of the pension fund board, WCC had agreed to increase its contribution by 1% to 15% per annum for a period of three years.

The president of the pension fund board requested that his thanks be expressed to the executive committee for this favourable response. He also requested continued collaboration with the WCC, particularly concerning consultation on matters of staff benefits where decisions have an impact on pension fund obligations. It was confirmed that the pension fund board will be working actively with its actuaries to assess further remedial actions which may be taken to regain financial equilibrium, including the feasibility of a gradual conversion to a defined contributions plan. It was agreed that the pension fund board would prepare a progress report to be shared with the finance committee in August 2009.

Upon recommendation of the finance sub-committee, the executive committee approved by consensus the proposal to require that the general secretary consult as appropriate with the pension fund board on staffing plans.

8.2.8 Investments review 2008

In accordance with investment policy, a report on the preliminary results 2008 compared to budget was presented.

A gain of CHF 56,000 was reported for the general investment portfolio of CHF 9.3 million following the decision taken by executive committee in Lübeck to reduce interest rate risk.

The endowment fund portfolio was reduced in value from CHF 6.3 million to CHF 5.3 million, as a result of net unrealised losses. No distribution from the endowment fund to the programmes was made in 2008.

Based on estimates received from Ecumenical Trust, preliminary results include losses on revaluation of investments of CHF 0.7 million. In accordance with its policy to distribute 4% of the average of 12 quarters of portfolio valuation, accrued income of approximately CHF 100,000 has been included in the preliminary results.

The Oikocredit investment of CHF 0.7 million was revalued downwards by CHF 80,000, reflecting the unfavourable evolution of the EUR/CHF rate at the year end.

8.2.9 Income development

A report on income development was presented to the sub-committee. In introduction the main challenges were presented: firstly, the global financial crisis which is affecting fund raising in general and, secondly, the decrease of staffing dedicated to fundraising in the WCC.

The report covered the main sources of funding which are contributions from membership, specialized ministries, foundations, individuals and congregations. Membership income has decreased from CHF 6.6 million in 2007 to CHF 6.1 million in 2008 and from 232 churches to 184. In 2008 four churches made a request for a review of the level of their contribution. Relationships with specialized ministries have been developed through several team visits. New contacts have been developed with mission agencies and they have been invited to attend the WCC Round Table. Notably, contact has been established with the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Mission.

Although it had been an objective of the strategy, programme staff involvement in fundraising, through training, coaching and systematization of fundraising, has not been achieved due to lack of staff resources primarily on the IMD side.

A dedicated staff member, funded by a partner for a two-year contract, has been focusing on fundraising from foundations since July 2008. Eleven proposals were prepared, and two are outstanding for CHF 229,000. In 2009 it is expected that 20 proposals will be developed totalling CHF 2 million with a goal of raising CHF 300,000.

Solicitation of individuals is a labour intensive task that is partly postponed due to lack of staff resources. There is a real potential that has been partially developed through societies such as the "Friends of the WCC" in Korea and there is a similar possibility in Japan.

The fundraising plan for IEPC was presented with the goal of raising CHF 3 million. A special event at the WCC Round Table and an appeal to the churches will be organized, as well as some focused campaigns in partnership with certain groups of churches.

The fundraising plan for the development of conference facilities at Bossey has the aim of raising up to CHF 1 million towards construction costs. Potential donors would include

private banks, the Friends of Bossey and individuals. Active solicitation will start once construction permits have been received. Some fundraising materials were shared.

The work of the IMD staff is greatly appreciated under the difficult circumstances. Staff is encouraged to develop concrete initiatives for mobilizing funding partners' participation in each of the programmes. Concern was raised about the real drop in membership income, and about the difficulty of requesting membership contributions from churches which have very little active relationship or involvement with the WCC.

Upon recommendation of the finance sub-committee, the executive committee approved by consensus the proposal to require:

- the general secretary to consider filling, as soon as possible, the position of a full-time director for IMD, both competent and experienced in fundraising;
- that a programme for regular training and accompaniment of programmatic and management staff for fundraising be developed and implemented, and progress be reported to the finance sub-committee in February 2010;
- that a review of fundraising for IEPC be presented to the finance sub-committee in February 2010 to allow an assessment of the planned dimensions of the event.

8.2.10 Framework budget 2010-2011

The finance sub-committee received a report outlining the direct programme costs planned by project for 2010 and an analysis of the evolution from the 2009 budget and programme structure. Direct programme costs for 2010 total CHF 12.2 million compared with CHF 14.1 million in the 2009 budget.

The principal variances relate to the costs of CHF 0.7 million in 2009 for central committee and CHF 0.4 million in 2009 for the faith and order plenary commission meeting, neither of which meetings will be held in 2010. Various other budget adjustments with a net impact of CHF 0.7 million have been proposed in the framework at project level.

The framework budget shows total staff costs of CHF 17.7 million. This estimate has been based on the 2009 staff cost budget of CHF 18.9 million, adjusted only for planned staff retirements. Detailed work concerning the allocation of staff to projects and plans concerning hiring for vacancies will be addressed in preparing the draft budget 2010.

As a general rule, new recruitments should not be planned systematically to replace staff leaving in 2009 and 2010. One exception may be the need to appoint a director of income development.

Framework costs for 2011 were presented taking account of costs for the central committee meeting of that year, the operating income and costs of the Bossey development and plans for the IEPC. Concern was expressed that commitments for expenditure in relation to the IEPC should not be contracted unless the results of fundraising efforts prove successful.

Upon recommendation of the finance sub-committee, the executive committee approved by consensus the proposal to require:

- that the draft budget 2010 be developed with an increase to unrestricted funds of CHF 0.7 million and that an alternative scenario be drafted with an increase to unrestricted funds of CHF 1.0 million with the objective of providing a margin for unexpected developments or needs in 2010;
- that exceptional recruitments for 2010 be made without unfavourable impact on the increase to unrestricted funds to be shown in the draft budget;
- that financial commitments for the IEPC not be entered into before February 2010 when the dimensions of the meeting will be determined on the basis of funding commitments.

9 SUPPLEMENTARY REVIEW

Rev. Dr Walter Altmann moderated a closed hearing session. He introduced Mr John Campbell, representative of KPMG and the council's long-standing audit partner, who presented the results of the supplementary review as requested by the executive committee in September 2008 (Minutes of the Meeting of the Executive Committee, Lübeck, 23-26 September 2008, p. 46).

Mr Campbell noted that his engagement letter with the council for this supplementary review required strict confidentiality of the findings, and that therefore he would not be presenting a written report. He shared verbally on the scope of work, findings and recommendations. His primary finding was that the policies governing the general secretary's expenses were poorly written and open to misinterpretation, and that there were no clear mechanisms for oversight of the general secretary's budget.

H.E. Metropolitan Prof. Dr Gennadios of Sassima assumed moderation of the session. Rev. Dr Walter Altmann presented the new policy document regarding the general secretary, which came into effect on 1 January 2009 under the authority of the moderator. These policies were developed by the officers with the participation of Mr John Campbell, and incorporate in full the recommendations arising from the supplementary review.

Members of the executive committee raised the question of the constitutional authority of the moderator or officers to issue regulations binding upon the general secretary. It has been the unwritten tradition of the council that the moderator does have this role in relation to the general secretary. It is expected that this matter will be clarified in the recommendations of the working group on governance.

After discussion of the constitutional question, H.E. Metropolitan Prof. Dr Gennadios of Sassima announced a change of category to a closed decision session.

In the absence of clear constitutional direction regarding the officers' authority in this matter, the executive committee affirmed the steps taken by the officers and the document on general secretary policies thus presented and put into effect on 1 January 2009, and approved by unanimous consensus the document as an authoritative policy of the council.

The executive committee expressed deep appreciation to Mr John Campbell for the work undertaken and the clarity of his presentation, and noted with gratitude the full cooperation of the World Council of Churches staff and general secretary in Mr Campbell's work. Members felt that these matters, first raised in Geneva in February 2008

and further considered in Lübeck in September 2008, could now be laid to rest, and that the executive committee could proceed with full confidence in the management of the council.

H.E. Metropolitan Prof. Dr Gennadios of Sassima then officially ended the closed session.

10 WORKING GROUP ON GOVERNANCE, ACCOUNTABILITY AND STAFF POLICY

10.1 Interim report of the working group

Rev. Dr Walter Altmann moderated a hearing session. He introduced Ms Birgitta Rantakari, co-moderator of the working group on governance, accountability and staff policy, who greeted the committee with memories of her years as moderator of the council's finance committee. She presented an interim report in the form of a communiqué from the working group, sharing the mandate, composition, progress to date and anticipated work (see Appendix III).

Rev. Dr Samuel Kobia shared that, although the executive committee had anticipated that a management consultant would accompany the working group beginning in January, it was not possible to identify such a person within that time frame. A Geneva-based management consulting firm has now been invited to make available a management consultant to work with the group as needed.

Although the stated mandate of the working group is to offer specific and immediate recommendations, the group requested the approval of the executive committee to undertake a longer-term evaluation of the World Council of Churches structures' capacity to meet the needs of the churches in the current ecumenical environment.

In discussion, members of the executive committee expressed gratitude to Ms Rantakari for her engaging presentation, and affirmed that the structures of the council must serve the central purpose of calling the churches to visible unity. They felt confident that the working group would bring helpful new policies and guidelines for the council's life together, and looked forward to receiving the recommendations in advance of the central committee, to allow for appropriate consultation.

The working group's interim report was referred to the staffing and nominations sub-committee for further consideration.

10.2 Recommendations arising from the interim report of the working group

Rev. Dr Walter Altmann moderated a decision session and invited Bishop Samuel R. Azariah to present the recommendations of the staffing and nominations sub-committee.

The executive committee approved by consensus the proposal to:

- receive the communiqué from the working group on governance, accountability and staff policy, with appreciation for the quick progress made by the group; to express its gratitude for the presentation by Ms Birgitta Rantakari, co-moderator of the group; and to ask that the final report be sent in good time to the executive committee;

- affirm the approach of the general secretary to consult a firm in Geneva for a management consultant according to the profile developed by the working group on governance as soon as possible.

11 STAFF POLICY DOCUMENTS

11.1 Staff rules

The executive committee met in hearing session. Mr Georges Lemopoulos, deputy general secretary, drew attention to a document describing revisions to the staff rules, as requested at the September 2008 executive committee and presented for information at this stage. He reported that the management anticipates concluding its negotiations with the staff representative group and bringing the final staff rules for approval by the executive committee in August 2009. He noted that the work on staff rules and staff policy will take full account of the recommendations of the working group on governance, accountability and staff policy.

11.2 Staff policy matters

Mr Georges Lemopoulos presented a document detailing policy considerations in regard to staff recruitment, performance appraisals, secondment, staff development (training), and years of service. This had been prepared in response to a request from the executive committee in September 2007, and is presented here for information. It is expected that the final policies on these matters will be developed in relation to the working group on governance, accountability and staff policy.

11.3 Analysis of former staff

Mr Georges Lemopoulos presented an analysis of the disposition of former council staff, as requested by the executive committee in September 2007. He noted that the information presented at this time relates to the Orthodox former members of staff, and reports on how these individuals have gone on to serve their churches and the ecumenical movement in a variety of capacities. Mr Lemopoulos anticipated presenting this type of analysis on a region-by-region basis at future meetings.

The three papers presented by Mr Lemopoulos were referred to the staffing and nominations sub-committee for further consideration.

11.4 Recommendations on staff policy

Rev. Dr Walter Altmann moderated a decision session and invited Bishop Samuel R. Azariah to present the recommendations of the staffing and nominations sub-committee.

The executive committee approved by consensus the proposal to:

- receive the update on staff rules and, pending input from the governance group, to refer the updated staff rules to the next executive committee in August 2009 for decision;
- receive the information provided on recruitment, performance appraisals and secondment;

- refer the matter of staff development to the governance group for their input towards further development of the policy;
- affirm the policy direction of the section on years of service of executive staff and to ask the general secretary for further work on the policy, including consultation with the governance group, before presentation to the executive and central committees in August-September 2009 for decision.

Mr Graham G. McGeoch wished to register his dissent to the affirmation of the policy on years of service, as he felt that it did not adequately reflect the will of the Porto Alegre assembly.

12 ASSEMBLY

12.1 Update on the assembly discernment process

The executive committee met in hearing session. Rev. Dr Samuel Kobia introduced Rev. Dr Daniel Buda, a new staff member in the field of church and ecumenical relations. He then invited Mr Douglas Chial to present an update on the assembly discernment process.

Mr Chial shared that the assembly discernment committee held its first meeting in November 2008, and enjoyed a very positive spirit of fellowship and trust among the committee members. This first meeting was in the nature of a "hearing session," gathering input through four main reflections, as follows:

- the ecclesial nature of the ecumenical movement with the churches as the primary "actors"
- changes within the ecumenical landscape and global Christianity
- the spiritual nature of fellowship and consensus
- analysis of the past three assemblies, how they responded to the world situation and how they broadened participation in the ecumenical movement.

At its next meeting, the committee will explore the various models and possibilities that have been suggested, and develop its recommendations for the central committee. Mr Chial noted that the term "expanded space" may be misleading, as the desire of all parties is for togetherness and deeper sharing. He concluded by remarking that the movement of the World Council of Churches toward consensus and fellowship has had a profound impact on other ecumenical and ecclesial bodies.

In discussion, members of the executive committee expressed appreciation for the work thus far, and expressed optimism about the way forward, while also reiterating the importance of not diminishing the voices of minority churches. Members hoped that the committee's recommendations could be circulated well in advance of the central committee, to allow for appropriate consultation.

The report on the assembly discernment process was forwarded to the staffing and nominations sub-committee for further consideration.

12.2 Recommendations on the assembly discernment process

Rev. Dr Walter Altmann moderated a decision session and invited Bishop Samuel R. Azariah to present the recommendations of the staffing and nominations sub-committee.

The executive committee approved by consensus the proposal to:

- receive with appreciation the update on the assembly discernment process and to ask that the report from the next meeting of the assembly discernment committee in March be shared immediately after the meeting with the executive committee members.

13 NOMINATIONS AND CONSULTATIVE BODIES

13.1 Nomination to governing body

Rev. Dr Walter Altmann moderated a decision session and invited Bishop Samuel R. Azariah to present the recommendations of the staffing and nominations sub-committee.

The executive committee approved by consensus the proposal to:

- accept that Rev. Dr Sarah Rogers replace Mr Sion Rhys Evans from the Church in Wales on the central committee.

13.2 By-laws of consultative bodies

The executive committee took note of the fact that the by-laws of the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs, the by-laws for the Echos Commission on Youth in the Ecumenical Movement and the by-laws of the Commission on World Mission and Evangelism will be presented to the central committee in September 2009 for approval.

14 RULES

Rev. Dr Walter Altmann moderated a decision session and invited Bishop Samuel R. Azariah to present the recommendations of the staffing and nominations sub-committee.

Bishop Azariah presented a proposed revision to Rule XVII on specialized ministries, as requested by one such ministry and as further amended by the sub-committee. The revised section of the rule would read:

> "Specialized ministries are those church-based, church-related or ecumenical organizations within the family of WCC member churches, serving the ecumenical movement particularly in areas such as mission, diakonia or development.
>
> Any specialized ministry committed to ecumenical witness and service may be recognized by the central committee as an ecumenical organization in working relationship with the World Council of Churches (…)".

The executive committee approved by consensus the proposal to:

- receive the proposed revision to Rule XVII on specialized ministries and to refer it to the central committee for decision;
- refer the matter also to the working group on governance for consideration.

15 CENTRAL COMMITTEE AGENDA

15.1 Presentation of the central committee agenda

Rev. Dr Samuel Kobia presented a draft agenda for the August/September 2009 meeting of the central committee. He noted that the business includes an unusual number of very weighty matters for decision. There will also be opportunities for engagement with the themes of the 2010 Edinburgh mission conference, and with the topics of "Church and Society" on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of the MIT conference.

Executive committee members expressed concern that the agenda was too ambitious, and offered suggestions for improvement. The central committee agenda was referred to the staffing and nominations sub-committee for further consideration.

15.2 Recommendations regarding the central committee agenda

Rev. Dr Walter Altmann moderated a decision session and invited Bishop Samuel R. Azariah to present the recommendations of the staffing and nominations sub-committee.

The executive committee approved by consensus to receive the draft agenda for the central committee meeting in August-September 2009 and to ask the general secretary to take the following concerns into account in revising the agenda for presentation to the officers in June:

- the need for well-trained moderators as this is such a heavy central committee meeting
- shorten the lunch break by one half hour
- public issues need to come earlier on the first day so that matters so that matters can be brought to the attention of the committee within the 24 hours period as specified by the "procedures for dealing with public issues" and the committee can meet at lunch time on the second day.
- election to come on Thursday at 16:30, taking into consideration the media aspect of announcing the new general secretary
- the need for guidelines and orientation for the process of election of general secretary for central committee members
- one session only on themes from Edinburgh 2010
- consider a full day of committees on Saturday
- retain five sessions for committees
- two sessions only to church and society issues
- note taken of the need for meetings of interested groups, e.g. confessional meetings, Africans and Africans in the Diaspora.

16 SEARCH COMMITTEE

Dr Agnes Abuom, moderator of the search committee, shared a brief verbal update on the work of the search committee. The committee received nominations and applications, and

will continue to do so until the closing date of 28 February 2009. They will meet in April to screen and short-list the candidates, and will conduct interviews in June.

Dr Abuom noted that the committee has received several communications expressing concern about the potentially unrealistic nature of the post of general secretary, combining both internal management and public leadership. The search committee anticipates forwarding reflections on the structure of the senior management team to the working group on governance.

The executive committee appreciated the update and committed to pray for God's guidance and wisdom for the search committee.

17 STAFFING

17.1 Closed session on staffing

Rev. Dr Walter Altmann moderated a closed decision session. He invited Bishop Samuel R. Azariah to present the recommendations from the staffing and nominations sub-committee regarding staffing.

17.1.1 Appointments

The executive committee approved by consensus the proposal to:

- appoint Dr Nigussu LEGESSE (Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church) as Programme Executive for Regional Relations, Africa, for a four-year contract from 1 April 2009, subject to obtaining a work permit;
- request the general secretary to assign Mr Jean-Nicolas BAZIN (Reformed Church of France) as manager and coordinator of finance services and administration from 1 April 2009 until the appointment of an associate general secretary for finance services and administration (FS&A);
- reaffirm its decision of September 2008 to defer the appointment of associate general secretary for finance services and administration until the next general secretary is in office.

Rev. Carmen Lansdowne raised concern about the inadequacy of staffing levels in the information technology area. The general secretary affirmed that this issue is well known and being considered.

17.1.2 Vacancies

The executive committee approved by consensus the proposal to:

- declare a vacancy for Programme Executive for Youth to replace Ms Natalie MAXSON who will be leaving at the end of July 2009;
- overturn its decision of September 2008 to declare a vacancy for the position of associate general secretary for programme, preferring rather to defer this vacancy until a later date.

17.1.3 Secondment

The executive committee took note that the process of secondment of a staff by the Korean Methodist Church is at an advanced stage. As soon as all technical aspects have been finalized, the general secretary will make the appointment and inform the executive committee.

The executive committee noted that the minutes of September 2008 request the general secretary to provide a list of secondments and the terms agreed with the seconding church or organization, and here reiterated that request.

17.1.4 Arrivals

The executive committee received information that the following staff members have taken up their positions since the last executive committee:

- Rev. Dr Daniel BUDA (Romanian Orthodox Church), Programme Executive for Church and Ecumenical Relations, started work on 1 January 2009.
- Ms Maria Cazilda CHAVEZ QUISPE (Methodist Church in Bolivia), Bolivia, Indigenous Peoples Consultant, started work on 1 December 2008.
- Mr Lawrence Michael John BAXTER-BROWN (Church of England) Consultant for Evangelism, started work on 15 January 2009.

17.1.5 Departures

The executive committee received information that the following staff members will leave the service of the World Council of Churches during 2009:

- Mr Carlos SINTADO, Consultant for Scholarships Project, on 31 March 2009
- Ms Natalie MAXSON, Programme Executive for Youth, on 31 July 2009
- Ms Brigitte SCHNEIDER, Project Assistant – Scholarships, on 31 July 2009
- Dr Aruna GNANADASON, (Church of South India) Executive Director for Planning and Integration, on 30 September 2009
- Ms Simone ERGAS, Administrative Assistant in the General Secretariat, on 30 September 2009
- Ms Luzia WEHRLE, Programme Assistant, on 15 October 2009
- Mr William TEMU, Associate General Secretary for Programme with the portfolio of Director of IMD, on 31 December 2009
- Rev. Dr Dietrich WERNER, Programme Consultant for Ecumenical Theological Education (ETE), on 31 December 2009

17.1.6 End of contract

The executive committee received a list of those staff whose current contracts will end during 2010-2013.

18 Evaluation

Members of the executive committee offered comments for evaluation of this session. There were expressions of appreciation for the one-day orientation preceding this meeting, and regret that the invitation to this extra day came too late for many people to rearrange their travel plans.

Members greatly appreciated the tone of fellowship and consensus which permeated this meeting, and thanked the officers for creating this atmosphere. Members of the programme sub-committee spoke of how much they appreciated hearing directly from the programme directors, and hoped that in future the entire executive committee could benefit from this type of input.

Members requested that the meeting schedule and documents reach the members much earlier, in order to provide opportunity for consultation in the churches and regions, and that the programme-related documents present information in a clearer and more complete manner.

Members expressed gratitude for the spiritual life of this meeting, including the morning prayers which were well-prepared and deeply spirit-led. They offered tremendous appreciation for the graceful leadership of the general secretary and the moderators over the last twelve months, and committed to moving forward with a renewed spirit of fellowship and trust within the executive committee.

19 Dates of next meetings

Rev. Dr Samuel Kobia informed the executive committee of the following meeting dates:

- 24-25 August 2009 (arrival 23rd), followed by central committee 26 August – 2 September 2009, in Geneva
- 23-26 February 2010 at Bossey
- 14-17 September 2010 in Scotland
- 14-15 February 2011, followed by central committee 16-23 February 2011, in Geneva
- 13-16 September 2011 in Addis Ababa (pending a formal invitation)
- 14-17 February 2012 in the Pacific region (pending a formal invitation). Members should set aside extra time for discussions and exposure visits
- 27-28 August 2012, followed by central committee 29 August – 5 September in either Crete or Rhodes
- 19-22 February 2013 at Bossey

20 Closing actions

Rev. Dr Samuel Kobia expressed, on behalf of the World Council of Churches staff, his great appreciation for the work of the executive committee and for the affirmation and support the executive committee has offered to staff. He apologized again for the late

delivery of documents in advance of this meeting. He thanked the executive committee for its gracious farewell to Ms Ursula Zierl upon her retirement from the council.

Rev. Dr Walter Altmann expressed his gratitude to Bossey for so warmly hosting the executive committee, and offered appreciation to all the council's staff for their dedicated service. He shared that he feels personal gratitude for the tone of this meeting and for the unity which emerged in the spirit of prayerful discernment.

Rev. Dr Walter Altmann closed the meeting of the executive committee at 1:25 pm on 20 February 2009 and prayed for our pilgrim journey within the ecumenical movement.

21 APPENDIX I – MEMBERS PRESENT

Officers:	Rev. Dr Walter Altmann	Moderator
	Metr. Prof. Dr Gennadios of Sassima	Vice-Moderator
	Rev. Dr Margaretha Hendriks-Ririmasse	Vice-Moderator
	Rev. Dr Samuel Kobia	General Secretary
Members:	Dr Agnes Abuom	
	Bishop Dr Hilarion Alfeyev	
	Archbishop Vicken Aykazian	
	Bishop Samuel R. Azariah	
	Metropolitan Bishoy of Damiette	
	Ms Margareta Grape	
	Ms Hae Sun Jung	
	Rev. Carmen Lansdowne	
	Rev. Sanele Faasua Lavatai	
	Pastor Antonio P. Malungo	
	Mr Graham G. McGeoch	
	Metropolitan Dr Nifon of Targoviste	
	Rev. Dr Larry Pickens	
	Rev. Dr Tyrone Pitts	
	Bishop Martin Schindehütte	
	Metropolitan Dr Vasilios of Constantia-Ammochostos	
	Ms Outi Vasko	
Ex officio:	Dean Anders Gadegaard	
	Ms Lois McCullough Dauway	
Apologies:	Bishop Ivan M. Abrahams	
	Ms Nerissa Celestine-James	
	Ms Iyabo Oyekola	
Staff:	Mr Jean-Nicolas Bazin	
	Mr Mark Beach	
	Ms Catherine Christ-Taha	
	Dr Aruna Gnanadason	
	Mr Georges Lemopoulos	
	Dr William Temu	
Minute-Writer:	Eden Grace	
Administration:	Ms Ursula Zierl	

22 APPENDIX II – MEMBERSHIP OF SUB-COMMITTEES

Programme:	Dr Agnes Abuom Rev. Dr Walter Altmann Archbishop Vicken Aykazian Bishop Dr Hilarion Alfeyev Ms Lois McCullough Dauway (Convener) Ms Margareta Grape Pastor Antonio P. Malungo Rev. Dr Tyrone Pitts Ms Outi Vasko
Finance:	Dean Anders Gadegaard (Convener) Rev. Dr Margaretha Hendriks-Ririmasse Rev. Carmen Lansdowne Bishop Dr Martin Schindehütte Metr. Dr Vasilios of Constantia-Ammochostos
Staffing and Nominations:	Metropolitan Bishoy of Damiette Bishop Samuel R. Azariah Metropolitan Prof. Dr Gennadios of Sassima (Convener) Ms Hae Sun Jung Rev. Dr Samuel Kobia Rev. Sanele Faasua Lavatai Mr Graham G. McGeoch Metropolitan Dr Nifon of Targoviste Rev. Dr Larry Pickens
Public Issues:	Dr Agnes Abuom (Convener) Ms Margareta Grape Bishop Dr Hilarion Alfeyev Rev. Sanele Faasua Lavatai Pastor Antonio Malungo Metropolitan Dr Nifon of Targoviste Rev. Dr Tyrone Pitts Bishop Dr Martin Schindehütte Ms Outi Vasko

23 Appendix III – Interim report (communiqué) of the working group on governance, accountability and staff policy

The working group on governance, accountability and staff policy (the "governance group" or the "group"), held its first meeting at the Bossey Ecumenical Institute, 2-4 February 2009. The WCC central committee February 2008 directed formation of the working group; the September 2008 executive committee established its parameters, with the terms of reference and composition of the working group approved by the officers in December 2008.

Participants: The governance group includes members of the current WCC central committee: Rev. Canon Nangula E. Kathindi, Anglican Church of Southern Africa; Bishop Taranath S. Sagar (co-moderator), Methodist Church in India; Dr David Goodbourn (rapporteur), Baptist Union of Great Britain; Ms Anne Glynn-Mackoul (rapporteur), Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch and all the East; former members of WCC governing bodies: Ms Birgitta Rantakari (co-moderator), Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland (former member central and executive committees, moderator of the finance committee from Canberra to Harare); the Very Rev. Georges Tsetsis, Ecumenical Patriarchate (former staff, former member central and executive committees); advisor from the specialized ministries Mr Jack van Ham (ICCO); advisor from outside WCC structures Ms Leni Björklund (Church of Sweden). Not able to be present at the first meeting was Rev. Clifton Kirkpatrick, Presbyterian Church USA (former member central and executive committees).

Staff: General secretary Rev. Dr Samuel Kobia met with the group, which also heard from deputy general secretary Mr Georges Lemopoulos and Mr Jean-Nicolas Bazin, interim coordinator for our sector on finance, services and administration. Ms Catherine Christ-Taha, assistant to the general secretary, accompanied and assisted the governance group. Prayer sessions were coordinated by Ms Tara Tautari.

Resources: Background documents from central and executive committee meetings giving rise to the governance group were provided to participants, along with the WCC constitution and rules, staff rules, CUV (common understanding and vision), and other relevant documents related to the governance and management of the WCC as requested. The group received with gratitude (1) preliminary work that had been undertaken on the issues of governance that identified current rules, regulations, and policies that describe the roles and responsibilities of various officers, governing bodies, committees, and commissions; (2) descriptions of situations of traditional practice and expectations outside of the governing documents; and (3) direction to the possibility that other documents may contain relevant policy, such as minutes of the central and executive committees that may address areas not specifically covered in current written rules, regulations and policies (such as guidelines for the search and selection of a new general secretary).

Preliminary Work: In an open, transparent and constructive forward-looking atmosphere, the governance group explored generally the situations that gave rise to some of the issues presented to the committee, identifying particularly areas where the governing bodies, officers and staff may not have been provided with sufficient guidance

by the existing documentation to assure a common understanding of roles, responsibility, accountability and appropriate oversight.

The group understands its mandate as including not only the relatively short-term goal of offering specific recommendations to clarify the various roles, functions and lines of accountability between and among the various existing governing bodies and management/staff as set out in the terms of reference, but also a longer-term evaluation of whether the current structures for governance of the WCC meet the needs of the churches in the current ecumenical environment or can be made more relevant, particularly in light of the reports from Porto Alegre.

The governance group heard about the pressures in the role of general secretary as currently conceived, and recognized the need to strengthen the office of the general secretary with additional resources in order to enable the general secretary to provide leadership for the ecumenical movement and living contact with the member churches.

The group also identified some of the key underlying issues that needed to be explored as the practical issues are tackled. They include:

- defining the borders between governance, management and advice, so as to discern the appropriate location for each within the structures of the WCC;
- exploring the distinction between the WCC as a provider of ecumenical space both for the fellowship of churches and for the wider ecumenical movement (including, for example, specialised ministries), and the WCC as an organisation, so appropriate arrangements for the management of each can be provided;
- identifying the competing needs for, on the one hand, broad representation and ownership and, on the other, competent and efficient governance and management;
- discerning the different roles and cultures of people involved in governance as both representatives of their churches and ambassadors to their churches.

These issues will underlie the group's approach to some of the immediate questions, such as the role of the presidents, the role of the officers, the timing of central committee meetings, the composition and working processes of committees. It is the group's intention to bring concrete proposals regarding all of these, within the context of the present constitutional arrangements, to the central committee in August.

The governance group does, however, feel that there are deeper issues beyond these immediate concerns that require a longer-term view. They are bound up with the way we envision the future role of the WCC, as it moves from its 20th century history to become an instrument for the 21st century. On these the group's work is not the only relevant process currently taking place. The work of the assembly discernment committee is one. The programme area on ecumenism in the 21st century is another. We feel it important however, to bring to the central committee some possibilities for alternate models of governance in the light of possible future scenarios regarding its role. The executive committee may wish to comment on this.

Future work: The governance group anticipates that it will continue its work electronically and has arranged to meet twice more before the central committee meets in August/September 2009: 18-20 May 2009 and 29-31 July 2009.

The group has asked that a management consultant be engaged along the line of the terms of reference articulated by the group. Additionally, the governance group asked the general secretary to arrange for the identified advisor or advisors to extract from the records of the WCC policy statements that relate to the current structure for the governance of the WCC, particularly the roles of moderator and vice-moderators.